

# Kenilworth Public Schools

## Curriculum Guide

Content Area: English

Grade: 7

BOE Approved: 10/15/2013

Revision Date: August 2033

Submitted by: Nicole Warchol & Michelle VanSteenacker

BOE Revision Approved: 8/14/23

# English Language Arts Scope and Sequence

Grade 7

August 2023

Unit 1- The Structure of Stories, (graphic novel format study)	Unit 2- Character Development, (novel in verse format study)	Unit 3- Non-Fiction: Studying Influential People & The Stories That Shape Them <i>(A Study of Narrative Non-Fiction &amp; Other Types of Non-Fiction)</i>	Unit 4- An Exploration of Theme (Author Study & Book Clubs)
4-6 Weeks	4-6 Weeks	5-6 Weeks	4-6 Weeks
<p><i>Unit Description:</i> In this first unit, readers dive into the world of narratives, while also exploring the layout and structure of graphic novels. Readers have an opportunity to analyze and think deeply about how the visual representations help us to further understand the text. An important piece of this unit is to also ignite a spark in readers' interest in reading and to establish the environment for reading workshop. The graphic novel is an enticing way for readers to grow deep conversations and also find new opportunities to discuss texts with their peers. We invite readers to look closely at how the story is intentionally laid out visually and to develop an awareness for the arc of a text. Readers make</p>	<p><i>Unit Description:</i> In this unit, students deepen their understanding of characters and their development over the course of a story. getting to know the characters as real people. We do this so that we can begin to empathize, accept, and develop a more broad idea of characters' emotions and motives. Readers will actively observe characters during daily reading, and, over time, refine their thinking which will allow them to form new perspectives about themselves, others, and the world around them. Reading notebooks and sticky notes serve as tools that students use to record their thinking and to collect examples from the text as support</p>	<p><i>Unit Description:</i> In this unit, students study narrative nonfiction (memoirs, biographies, and documentaries) to determine how an individual's experience shapes and impacts a reader's perception of humanity and the world. As readers, students consider what lessons they can learn, analyze an author's craft moves, and think big about different aspects of the memoirs. As writers, students study mentor texts, then try out various strategies as they create their own narrative nonfiction texts. Ultimately, they capture and share a compelling story about themselves.</p>	<p><i>Unit Description:</i> In this unit, students deepen their understanding of characters and themes in order to write and discuss bigger truths about life. This means readers learn how to think right now and over time about characters, as well as refine their thinking to form bigger ideas. Reading notebooks serve as a daily tool that students use to record their thinking and collect examples from the text as support for their ideas. It's suggested that students work in either a partnership or a book club during this unit so they can regularly talk to others about their thinking. Student partners/clubs can read the same books or may simply read books by the</p>

<p>predictions based on the exposition of a story and revise their thinking as they read. It is important during this first unit to establish strong reading habits, set goals, and help readers see the potential of their readers notebook.</p>	<p>for their ideas. The benefit of students working in either a partnership or a book club during this unit is that they can regularly talk to others about their thinking. Student partners/clubs can read the same books or may simply read books by the same author or from the same series. If your classroom library does not support this, students can instead read from different books. Make sure to choose a rich read aloud book with dynamic characters so you can model the types of thinking students will develop across the unit. In this unit, students will be encouraged to track, explore, hypothesize about, challenge and refine ideas as a way to deepen their understanding of characters in literature who are just as nuanced as real people.</p>		<p>same author or from the same series. This unit is meant to encourage students to think in many ways, talk in many ways, and write in many ways about the characters and themes they encounter in stories. As readers and writers, students track, explore, hypothesize about, challenge and refine ideas as a way to deepen their understanding of characters in literature.</p>
<p><i>Unit Targets:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● RL.7.1. Cite several pieces of textual evidence and make relevant connections to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as</li> </ul>	<p><i>Unit Targets:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● RL.7.1. Cite several pieces of textual evidence and make relevant connections to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as</li> </ul>	<p><i>Unit Targets:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● RI.7.3. Analyze the interactions between individuals, events, and ideas in a text (e.g., how ideas influence individuals or events, or how</li> </ul>	<p><i>Unit Targets:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● RL.7.1. Cite several pieces of textual evidence and make relevant connections to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.</li> </ul>

<p>inferences drawn from the text.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● RL.7.2. Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.</li> <li>● RL.7.3. Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (e.g., how setting shapes the characters or plot).</li> <li>● RL.7.10. By the end of the year read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems at grade level text-complexity or above, scaffolding as needed.</li> <li>● W.7.3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences B. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, and description, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters. D. Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences and events.</li> </ul>	<p>inferences drawn from the text.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● RL.7.3. Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (e.g., how setting shapes the characters or plot).</li> <li>● RL.7.4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of rhymes and other repetitions of sounds (e.g., alliteration) on a specific verse or stanza of a poem or section of a story or drama.</li> <li>● RL.7.5. Analyze how a drama's or poem's form or structure (e.g., soliloquy, sonnet) contributes to its meaning.</li> <li>● RL.7.6. Analyze how an author develops and contrasts the points of view of different characters or narrators in a text.</li> <li>● RL.7.10. By the end of the year read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems at grade level text-complexity or above, scaffolding as needed.</li> </ul>	<p>individuals influence ideas or events).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● RI.7.5. Analyze the structure an author uses to organize a text, including how the major sections contribute to the whole and to the development of the ideas.</li> <li>● RI.7.6. Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how the author distinguishes his or her position from that of others.</li> <li>● RI.7.7. Compare and contrast a text to an audio, video, or multimedia version of the text, analyzing each medium's portrayal of the subject (e.g., how the delivery of a speech affects the impact of the words).</li> <li>● RI.7.9. Analyze and reflect on (e.g. practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) how two or more authors writing about the same topic shape their presentations of key information by emphasizing different evidence or advancing different interpretations of facts.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● RL.7.2. Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.</li> <li>● RL.7.3. Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (e.g., how setting shapes the characters or plot).</li> <li>● RL.7.6. Analyze how an author develops and contrasts the points of view of different characters or narrators in a text.</li> <li>● RL.7.10. By the end of the year read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems at grade level text-complexity or above, scaffolding as needed.</li> <li>● W.7.4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, voice and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)</li> <li>● W.7.9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. A. Apply grade 7 Reading standards to literature (e.g., "Compare and contrast a fictional portrayal of a time, place, or character and a</li> </ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● SL.7.1. Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly. A. Come to discussions prepared, having read or researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion. B. Follow rules for collegial discussions, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed. C. Pose questions that elicit elaboration and respond to others' questions and comments with relevant observations and ideas that bring the discussion back on topic as needed. D. Acknowledge new information expressed by others and, when warranted, modify their own views.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● W.7.4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, voice and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)</li> <li>● W.7.5. With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.</li> <li>● W.7.6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and link to and cite sources as well as to interact and collaborate with others, including linking to and citing sources.</li> <li>● W.7.10. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, metacognition/self correction, and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● RI.7.10. By the end of the year read and comprehend literary nonfiction at grade level text-complexity or above, with scaffolding as needed.</li> <li>● W.7.2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.</li> <li>● W.7.4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, voice and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)</li> <li>● W.7.5. With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.</li> <li>● W.7.9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to</li> </ul>	<p>historical account of the same period as a means of understanding how authors of fiction use or alter history”).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● W.7.10. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, metacognition/self correction, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.</li> <li>● SL.7.1. Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly. A. Come to discussions prepared, having read or researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion. B. Follow rules for collegial discussions, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed. C. Pose questions that elicit elaboration and respond to others' questions and comments with relevant observations and ideas</li> </ul>
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	<p>revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.</p> <p>SL.7.1. Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly. A. Come to discussions prepared, having read or researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion. B. Follow rules for collegial discussions, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed. C. Pose questions that elicit elaboration and respond to others' questions and comments with relevant observations and ideas that bring the discussion back on topic as needed. D. Acknowledge new information expressed</p>	<p>support analysis, reflection, and research.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● W.7.10. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, metacognition/self correction, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.</li> <li>● SL.7.2. Analyze the main ideas and supporting details presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and explain how the ideas clarify a topic, text, or issue under study.</li> <li>● L.7.2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.</li> <li>● L.7.6. Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a</li> </ul>	<p>that bring the discussion back on topic as needed. D. Acknowledge new information expressed by others and, when warranted, modify their own views.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● L.7.1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.</li> <li>● L.7.2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.</li> </ul>
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	by others and, when warranted, modify their own views.	word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.	
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# English Language Arts 7

Grade Level: 7

August 2023

## Unit 1: The Structure of Stories, (graphic novel genre study)

**Unit Summary:** In this first unit, readers dive into the world of narratives, while also exploring the layout and structure of graphic novels. Readers have an opportunity to analyze and think deeply about how the visual representations help us to further understand the text. An important piece of this unit is to also ignite a spark in readers' interest in reading and to establish the environment for reading workshop. The graphic novel is an enticing way for readers to grow deep conversations and also find new opportunities to discuss texts with their peers. We invite readers to look closely at how the story is intentionally laid out visually and to develop an awareness for the arc of a text. Readers make predictions based on the exposition of a story and revise their thinking as they read. It is important during this first unit to establish strong reading habits, set goals, and help readers see the potential of their readers notebook.

**Big Idea:** Readers recognize how images and text work together to create the narrative of a graphic novel and can use this knowledge to deepen their understanding of the story.

### Unit Essential Questions:

- How do authors use images to capture their audience and convey emotion?
- How do readers utilize multiple reading strategies to gain a full understanding of a graphic novel?
- How can readers use the structure of a narrative to assist in their comprehension of a story?

### Unit Enduring Understandings:

- The artwork and text work together enhance the author's storytelling ability. Distinguishing among these elements contributes to the overall meaning of a story.
- Making inferences and predictions based on the visual elements supports comprehension of the story.
- Knowledge and awareness of the arc of a story allows readers to proactively read the text.
- Writers utilize various techniques to compose engaging texts.

- What writing techniques can we learn to make our stories come alive?

### **Unit Learning Targets**

*Students will...*

- Identify and analyze story structure (exposition, complication, climax, falling action, resolution).
- Recognize format and specific graphic novel features.
- Analyze how authors' artistic choices (images, colors, etc.) create an overall mood or tone.
- Apply reading strategies (eg. inferencing) in order to support comprehension of a text.
- Compose writing that utilizes various narrative writing techniques (dialogue, descriptive writing, setting).

### **Evidence of Learning**

Formative Assessments:

- Reader response: journal entries, one-pager, double-entry journal, graphic organizer.
- Readers Notebook entries

Summative Assessments:

- narrative writing workshop assignment
- Revised Readers Notebook entries
- Book review

### **NJSLS Standards:**

RL.7.1. Cite several pieces of textual evidence and make relevant connections to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

RL.7.2. Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.

RL.7.3. Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (e.g., how setting shapes the characters or plot).

RL.7.10. By the end of the year read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems at grade level text-complexity or above, scaffolding as needed.

W.7.3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences B. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, and description, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters. D. Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences and events.

SL.7.1. Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly. A. Come to discussions prepared, having read or researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion. B. Follow rules for collegial discussions, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed. C. Pose questions that elicit elaboration and respond to others' questions and comments with relevant observations and ideas that bring the discussion back on topic as needed. D. Acknowledge new information expressed by others and, when warranted, modify their own views.

#### **Career Readiness, Life Literacies, and Key Skills (CLKS):**

- 9.4.8.GCA.2: Demonstrate openness to diverse ideas and perspectives through active discussions to achieve a group goal.
- 9.4.5.GCA.1: Analyze how culture shapes individual and community perspectives and points of view (e.g., 1.1.5.C2a, RL.5.9, 6.1.5.HistoryCC.8).

#### **Computer Science and Design Thinking Standards:**

- 8.2.8.ITH.2: Compare how technologies have influenced society over time.

#### **Climate Change Standards:**

- 9.4.8.IML.7: Use information from a variety of sources, contexts, disciplines, and cultures for a specific purpose (e.g., 1.2.8.C2a, 1.4.8.CR2a, W.5.8, 6.1.8.GeoSV.3.a, 6.1.8.CivicsDP.4.b, 7.1.NH. IPRET.8).



- Readers use their growing knowledge of genre and archetypes to map out and reevaluate the arc of the story.

#### Instructional Strategies and Practices:

- Reading conferences & strategy groups as needed.
- Class discussion & pair share
- Literature circle
- Mentor texts, supplemental videos

#### Focus Lessons – Graphic Novels:

- Readers can identify and distinguish the different elements and features of graphic novels and how they contribute to the overall meaning of the story
  - Some elements are: panels, speech bubbles, motion lines, background colors, sound effects, etc.
- Readers pay attention to how the artwork and text work together to tell the story.
- Readers can also recognize when the artwork or text contradict each other and make inferences regarding the differing messages.
- Readers can recognize how the author uses the graphic novel elements to enhance the storytelling. We can specifically look at an element and discuss how it enhanced the meaning. (choice of visual colors, motion lines, speech bubbles, facial expressions, etc)
- Readers also make inferences based on the visual elements in order to support their comprehension of the story. We might notice something and then develop an idea based on that observation. So we might say, *“The author chose to make these two pages grey/white and I can infer that this is meant to....”*

#### Focus Lessons – Plot Structure and Conflict:

- Readers use “Somebody Wanted But So” to help them identify the conflict (what the character wants and what is standing in their way.)
- Readers are able to differentiate between external and internal conflict and explain which one their character is facing.
- Readers are able to connect the choices the character makes in effort to solve their conflict .
- Readers can identify how the character’ attempts to resolve the conflict and other obstacles can cause further complications.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Readers begin their novels and get a pulse on where the story is starting and thinking about where it might go. We can ask ourselves, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ “What are the characters current state emotionally?”</li> <li>○ “What are their hopes/needs?”</li> <li>○ “How might the author craft this story for the character?”</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Readers make predictions based on what they know about the text and what they know about the world and situations like the one presented in the text</li> <li>● Readers continually revise their predictions based on how the story is unfolding (events, characters’ reactions, and reader’s deepening understanding of the world the author created).</li> <li>● Readers use their growing knowledge of genre and archetypes to map out and reevaluate the arc of the story.</li> </ul>	
<i>Teacher Resources</i>	<i>Teacher Note</i>
<p><u>Suggested graphic novels for book clubs or independent reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>New Kid</i></li> <li>● <i>Bad Island</i></li> <li>● <i>Ghostopolis</i></li> <li>● <i>Drama</i></li> <li>● <i>Ghosts</i></li> <li>● <i>Frizzy</i></li> <li>● <i>Invisible</i></li> <li>● <i>Squished</i></li> <li>● <i>Shark Summer</i></li> <li>● <i>Stargazing</i></li> <li>● <i>Aquanaut</i></li> <li>● <i>Sheets</i></li> <li>● <i>Awkward</i></li> <li>● <i>I am Alfonso Jones</i></li> <li>● <i>When Stars are Scattered</i></li> </ul> <p><u>Suggested Graphic Novel Shorts for Shared Reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <a href="#"><u>“Radio Adrift”</u></a></li> </ul>	

- [“Loah”](#)
- [“Under the Floorboards”](#)
- [“Spring Cleaning”](#)
- [“Desert Island Playlist”](#)

Other Resources:

- Google Classroom
- Book Creator
- Flip
- Kami
- Newsela

**Differentiating Instruction:  
Students with Disabilities, English Language Learners,  
and Gifted & Talented Students**

**Examples of Strategies and Practices that Support Students with Disabilities:**

- Use of visual and multisensory formats
- Use of assisted technology
- Use of prompts
- Modification of content, student products, and assessment tools (rubrics for example)
- Testing accommodations
- Authentic assessments (ex: write an email to your state senator about a current event issue you are passionate about, design/implement a class debate, create and balance a college freshman budget, create a commercial that dispels a myth about climate change)

**Examples of Strategies and Practices that Support Gifted & Talented Students:**

- Adjusting the pace and content of lessons
- Curriculum compacting
- Inquiry-based instruction
- Independent study
- Higher-order thinking skills
- Interest-based content
- Student-driven instruction
- Real-world problems and scenarios

**Examples of Strategies and Practices that Support English Language Learners:**

- Pre-teaching of vocabulary and concepts
- Visual learning, including graphic organizers
- Use of cognates to increase comprehension
- Teacher modeling
- Pairing students with beginning English language skills with students who have more advanced English language skills
- Scaffolding
- Word walls
- Sentence frames
- Think-pair-share
- Cooperative learning groups

## Unit 2: Character Development, (novel in verse format study)

**Unit Summary:** In this unit, students deepen their understanding of characters and their development over the course of a story. getting to know the characters as real people. We do this so that we can begin to empathize, accept, and develop a more broad idea of characters' emotions and motives. Readers will actively observe characters during daily reading, and, over time, refine their thinking which will allow them to form new perspectives about themselves, others, and the world around them. Reading notebooks and sticky notes serve as tools that students use to record their thinking and to collect examples from the text as support for their ideas. The benefit of students working in either a partnership or a book club during this unit is that they can regularly talk to others about their thinking. Student partners/clubs can read the same books or may simply read books by the same author or from the same series. If your classroom library does not support this, students can instead read from different books. Make sure to choose a rich read aloud book with dynamic characters so you can model the types of thinking students will develop across the unit. In this unit, students will be encouraged to track, explore, hypothesize about, challenge and refine ideas as a way to deepen their understanding of characters in literature who are just as nuanced as real people.

### Learning Targets

#### NJSLS Standards:

- RL.7.1. Cite several pieces of textual evidence and make relevant connections to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- RL.7.3. Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (e.g., how setting shapes the characters or plot).
- RL.7.4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of rhymes and other repetitions of sounds (e.g., alliteration) on a specific verse or stanza of a poem or section of a story or drama.
- RL.7.5. Analyze how a drama's or poem's form or structure (e.g., soliloquy, sonnet) contributes to its meaning.
- RL.7.6. Analyze how an author develops and contrasts the points of view of different characters or narrators in a text.
- RL.7.10. By the end of the year read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems at grade level text-complexity or above, scaffolding as needed.
  
- W.7.4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, voice and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)

- W.7.5. With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.
- W.7.6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and link to and cite sources as well as to interact and collaborate with others, including linking to and citing sources.
- W.7.10. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, metacognition/self correction, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.
- SL.7.1. Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
  - A. Come to discussions prepared, having read or researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.
  - B. Follow rules for collegial discussions, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.
  - C. Pose questions that elicit elaboration and respond to others' questions and comments with relevant observations and ideas that bring the discussion back on topic as needed.
  - D. Acknowledge new information expressed by others and, when warranted, modify their own views.

**Career Readiness, Life Literacies, and Key Skills (CLKS):**

- 9.4.8.GCA.2: Demonstrate openness to diverse ideas and perspectives through active discussions to achieve a group goal.
- 9.4.5.GCA.1: Analyze how culture shapes individual and community perspectives and points of view (e.g., 1.1.5.C2a, RL.5.9, 6.1.5.HistoryCC.8).

**Primary Interdisciplinary Connections:**

Comprehensive Health and Physical Education:

2.1.8.EH.2: Analyze how personal attributes, resiliency, and protective factors support mental and emotional health.

**Computer Science and Design Thinking Standards:**

- 8.2.8.ITH.2: Compare how technologies have influenced society over time.

**Climate Change Standards:**

- 9.4.8.IML.7: Use information from a variety of sources, contexts, disciplines, and cultures for a specific purpose (e.g., 1.2.8.C2a, 1.4.8.CR2a, W.5.8, 6.1.8.GeoSV.3.a, 6.1.8.CivicsDP.4.b, 7.1.NH. IPRET.8).

**Big Idea:** By closely examining the characters in stories, we can develop an awareness of how life experiences and our choices can impact the person we grow into.

**Unit Essential Questions:**

- How do the choices characters make and their experiences impact readers?
- Why should we grow our knowledge about author craft?
- Why do authors choose to write about specific life struggles?

**Unit Enduring Understandings:**

- Examining characters and their complexities allow a better understanding of them as people, as well as helping us grow.
- Authors intentionally use techniques to add nuances to character and story.
- Relatable characters allow readers to interact with texts via a different lens.

**Unit Learning Targets**

*Students will...*

- Apply reading strategies (eg. inferencing) in order to support comprehension of a text.
- Utilize the Notice and Note Signposts to improve and deepen their comprehension and analysis of the text.
- Revise theories about a character by identifying initial impressions from the exposition and monitoring their evolution through their speech, choices, actions/reactions, and thoughts throughout the text.
- Recognize the techniques authors use in crafting nuanced characters in engaging stories.
- Compose writing that refines various narrative writing techniques (dialogue, descriptive writing, flashback, flashforward, figurative language, engaging hook).

**Summative Assessment:**

- Character analysis choice project
- Cold Reading Passage: Students will analyze a short text to demonstrate understanding of concepts.

**Formative Assessments:**

- Reader response: journal entries, one-pager, double-entry journal, graphic organizer.
- Readers Notebook entries
- Character concept checks (scaffolded exercises)

**Teaching and Learning Plan**

*Possible Teaching Points*

*Timeframe*

Immersion Week Activities:

- unit introduction
- readers notebook
- pre-assessment
- book tasting for independent reading/book club selections

1 week

Focus Lessons: Character:

- Readers examine main characters closely. We can find places in the text that highlight the complexities of a character. We might consider:
  - Physical characteristics or traits (how they look)
  - Internal characteristics or traits (how they feel, think or act)
  - When they seem powerful or powerless

3-4 weeks

- When or with whom they are closed off or opened up (thinking about when they “let their guard down”)
- How others see the character
- How the character sees him/herself
- Readers stop as we read to think about patterns and notice what tends to keep happening to particular characters in a book. We use these patterns to think over-time and make notebook entries to explore new ideas we’re having about a character. We might focus on repeated:
  - Trouble or conflict
  - Achievement or success
  - Settings that create ease or discomfort
  - Character interactions
- Readers compare characters within a book by thinking about:
  - Their roles
  - Their motivations
  - The choices they make
  - The lessons they learn
- Readers stop as we read to think about changes in a character’s behavior or times when the author is letting us inside the character’s head. Readers also stop as we read to think about patterns and notice what tends to keep happening to particular characters in a book. We use these patterns to think over-time and make notebook entries to explore new ideas we’re having about a character. We might focus on repeated:
  - Trouble or conflict
  - Achievement or success
  - Settings that create ease or discomfort
  - Character interactions

Suggested Reader’s Notebook Entries/Mini-lessons:

- Readers match the ways we write a notebook entry to our thinking goals. For example, if we want to track changes over time, we might use a timeline or main events/reactions t-chart. If we want to compare characters, we might use a three column chart, one column for each individual character and one reserved for the ways in which they are alike.
- Readers often begin each independent reading session by rereading where we left off in our thinking the day before. We get our minds ready to either continue that type of thinking or decide on a new intention for our reading work today.

- Readers take a minute or two after club or partner conversations to write down ideas we spoke about or new ideas we want to remember.
- Readers show our notebook entries to peers and explain our thinking using this visual. We can ask for feedback to push our thinking even more: “What else could I add?” “What are you thinking about this idea?”
- When readers notice that we are stuck in a rut of always writing in the same ways, we challenge ourselves to try a new type of entry. We can think, “Who has tried something I might like to try?” “What have we tried as a class?” “What story element or aspect of a character have I not yet explored?”

#### Focus Lessons: Novels in Verse

- Readers can recognize and explain poetic techniques and elements in literature.
  - metaphor
  - simile
  - alliteration
  - imagery
  - personification
  - stanzas and line breaks

#### Instructional Strategies and Practices:

- Reading conferences & strategy groups as needed.
- Class discussion & pair share
- Literature circle
- Mentor texts, supplemental videos

*Teacher Resources*

Suggested novels in verse for book clubs or independent reading:

- *Starfish* (Lisa Fipps)
- *The Crossover* (Kwame Alexander)
- *Rebound* (Kwame Alexander)
- *Booked* (Kwame Alexander)
- *Good Different* (Meg Eden Kuyatt)
- *Alone* (Megan E. Freeman)
- *House Arrest* (K.A. Holt)
- *Before the Ever After* (Jacqueline Woodson)
- *A Work in Progress* (Jarrett Lerner)

Suggested Novels for Whole-Class Reading:

- *The Outsiders* (SE Hinton)
- *The Crossover* (Kwame Alexander)
- *Good Different* (Meg Eden Kuyatt)

-Google Classroom

-Book Creator

-Flip

-Kahoot

-Kami

-Freckle

-No Red Ink

-Newsela

(See this [list](#) for Kenilworth Tools and Platforms)

**Differentiating Instruction:  
Students with Disabilities, English Language Learners,  
and Gifted & Talented Students**

Examples of Strategies and Practices that Support Students with Disabilities:

- Use of visual and multisensory formats
- Use of assisted technology
- Use of prompts
- Modification of content, student products, and assessment tools (rubrics for example)
- Testing accommodations
- Authentic assessments (ex: write an email to your state senator about a current event issue you are passionate about, design/implement a class debate, create and balance a college freshman budget, create a commercial that dispels a myth about climate change)

Examples of Strategies and Practices that Support Gifted & Talented Students:

- Adjusting the pace and content of lessons
- Curriculum compacting
- Inquiry-based instruction
- Independent study
- Higher-order thinking skills
- Interest-based content
- Student-driven instruction
- Real-world problems and scenarios

Examples of Strategies and Practices that Support English Language Learners:

- Pre-teaching of vocabulary and concepts
- Visual learning, including graphic organizers
- Use of cognates to increase comprehension
- Teacher modeling
- Pairing students with beginning English language skills with students who have more advanced English language skills
- Scaffolding
- Word walls
- Sentence frames
- Think-pair-share
- Cooperative learning groups

### **Unit 3: Non-Fiction: Studying Influential People & The Stories That Shape Them (*A Study of Narrative Non-Fiction & Other Types of Non-Fiction*)**

**Unit Summary:** In this unit, readers develop an awareness of the power of influence in our world while looking at multiple media and texts with a judicious eye. Whether it be through reading blogs, listening to podcasts, watching videos, or reading memoirs and articles, readers carefully begin to consider the motivation of individuals who attempt to spread influence. Through their reading work, students learn how to take a step back and suspend judgment in order to look at an influencer or “change-maker” or “trail blazer” from many lenses. This close exploration supports students in constructing new understandings about the ways in which we affect one another. Personal narratives and memoirs are both written accounts of personal experiences, but there is a difference between these two genres. In the former, writers write true stories, revise them as they bring out the story shape, think “What’s this story really about?,” and then bring that idea forward. When composing memoirs, writers start with big, important ideas they want to explore and communicate. The idea comes first, and then they collect small moments *around* the idea. Memoir is a blend of personal narrative and personal essay, storytelling and reflective writing. Reading some sample memoirs will bring this idea to a broader understanding.

#### **Learning Targets**

#### **NJSLS Standards:**

- RI.7.3. Analyze the interactions between individuals, events, and ideas in a text (e.g., how ideas influence individuals or events, or how individuals influence ideas or events).
- RI.7.5. Analyze the structure an author uses to organize a text, including how the major sections contribute to the whole and to the development of the ideas.
- RI.7.6. Determine an author’s point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how the author distinguishes his or her position from that of others.
- RI.7.7. Compare and contrast a text to an audio, video, or multimedia version of the text, analyzing each medium’s portrayal of the subject (e.g., how the delivery of a speech affects the impact of the words).

- RI.7.9. Analyze and reflect on (e.g. practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) how two or more authors writing about the same topic shape their presentations of key information by emphasizing different evidence or advancing different interpretations of facts.
- RI.7.10. By the end of the year read and comprehend literary nonfiction at grade level text-complexity or above, with scaffolding as needed.
- W.7.2. Written informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.
- W.7.4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, voice and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)
- W.7.5. With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.
- W.7.9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
- W.7.10. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, metacognition/self correction, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.
- SL.7.2. Analyze the main ideas and supporting details presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and explain how the ideas clarify a topic, text, or issue under study.
- L.7.2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
- L.7.6. Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

**Career Readiness, Life Literacies, and Key Skills (CLKS):**

- 9.1.8.CR.2: Compare various ways to give back through strengths, passions, goals, and other personal factors.
- 9.4.8.GCA.2: Demonstrate openness to diverse ideas and perspectives through active discussions to achieve a group goal.
- 9.4.5.GCA.1: Analyze how culture shapes individual and community perspectives and points of view (e.g., 1.1.5.C2a, RL.5.9, 6.1.5.HistoryCC.8).

**Computer Science and Design Thinking Standards:**

- 8.2.8.ITH.2: Compare how technologies have influenced society over time.

**Climate Change Standards:**

- 1.2.8.Re7b: Compare, contrast and analyze how various forms, methods and styles in media artworks affect and manage audience experience and create intention when addressing global issues including climate change.

**Big Idea:** In this unit, students study narrative nonfiction (memoirs, biographies, and documentaries) to determine how an individual's experience shapes and impacts a reader's perception of humanity and the world. As readers, students consider what lessons they can learn, analyze an author's craft moves, and think big about different aspects of the memoirs. As writers, students study mentor texts, then try out various strategies as they create their own narrative nonfiction texts. Ultimately, they capture and share a compelling story about themselves.

**Unit Essential Questions:**

- What ways do people exert influence over and inspire others?
- How does the way a story is told influence the way it is received?
- How might we expand the power of our own voices?

**Unit Enduring Understandings:**

- We influence and impact others through the things we say and do.
- The structure of a story can establish connections, or even lessen or emphasize the impact of events.
- Reading about the historical and societal context of someone else's life can serve as a model for how we might harness our own power.

**Unit Learning Targets**

*Students will...*

- Understand that memoirs can be structured in different ways (Chronological/linear, Bookend, Jumping back and forth in time, Parallel plotlines, Multiple/alternating points of view).
- Reflect on how our thinking has changed because of what we've read/heard/seen about the influential people we've researched.
- Analyze the various influences that impact individuals, the choices they make, and the life they live.
- Compose their own personal writing that reflects the various techniques seen in mentor texts.

## Evidence of Learning

**Summative Assessment:** Must have 2 summative assessments per semester/marketing period/trimester. First summative assessment must be administered and graded in the first half of the semester/marketing period/trimester.

Primary assessments: Revised notebook entries, unit tests, cumulative project, best draft submissions.

**Formative Assessments:**

- Must be ongoing and graded weekly.
- Primary assessments: Reading notebook entries, quizzes, exit tickets, notebook checks, homework, graphic organizers, conferring, self-evaluations, class discussions, draft work..

## Lesson Plans

*Activities/Interdisciplinary Connections*

*Timeframe*

Immersion Week Activities:

- unit introduction
- readers notebook
- pre-assessment
- book tasting for independent reading/book club selections

5-6 weeks

Possible Readers Notebook Topics:

*(can be used as spark for Book Club/Lit Circle discussion)*

- Readers look closely at our own habits, interests, communities, and peers as we brainstorm a list of individuals who may be influential in our lives. We ask ourselves, Whose influence is at work here?

- Readers get curious about inspirational individuals by asking questions and exploring ideas. We might reflect on:
  - What conditions have allowed this person to gain influence?
  - How has history/context played a role in this individual's importance?
  - What messages and ideas is this person promoting?
  - Who is affected by this individual's influence?
- Readers compare the extent to which others may influence us or those around us, reflecting on the scale of or degree to which those individuals hold power.
- Readers research and dig deep to seek out all the places and ways in which a particular individual attempts to influence others.
- Readers compare and contrast individuals who hold opposing influence, wondering what may inspire and give power to each.
- Readers study the spheres in which influence may be won or secured, comparing those personal, communal, and/or global spaces and ramifications.
- Once we have researched and learned about various influential individuals, readers pause and reflect to grow our thinking further:
  - What kind of impact/influence is this individual exercising?
  - Are there those that would disagree or dissent? Why or why not?
  - What voices are represented? Who may be served by this influence?
- Readers explore the choices of influential individuals.
  - We evaluate the choices made by influential individuals and consider whether we would have made decisions like that.
  - We consider whether the choices influential individuals make are driven by an intrinsic or extrinsic desire to influence others.
- Readers use our notebooks to collect and organize choices that influential individuals have made, looking closely at those that have either enabled or hindered their pursuit of goals or influence.
- Readers study the ways in which social constraints or historical context may impact the degree and power of an individual's influence. We seek out additional information to help us develop a more nuanced understanding of this.
- Readers analyze the ambiguities and opposition around influence. We think about who might be negatively or positively impacted by that influence.
- Readers clarify and refine our thinking about influence by looking across our notes to identify larger patterns, ideas, or trends that emerge.
- Readers examine the words and phrases used by people in an attempt to earn or gain influence. We ask ourselves, *How do these words carry particular meanings or significance?*

- Readers discuss the pros and cons of how influential people use their influence, as well as its effectiveness.
- Readers think about big ideas in a memoir and share these ideas with others. We might discuss:
  - Themes
  - Thematic patterns
  - How the narrator changes
  - Roles of minor characters
- Readers build on each other's ideas using phrases like:
  - *I also noticed...*
  - *Another time I noticed...*
  - *That is like...*
- Readers can go back to the pages in a memoir where we first started thinking about themes. We can study it with a writer's perspective by paying attention to the author's craft. We can ask, *How did the author begin developing her theme with craft?* We can notice:
  - Structure choices
  - Word usage
  - Syntax
  - Construction of scene
- Readers analyze the narrator's actions and motivations with our partners. We debate whether the narrator is justified in acting/ feeling right to feel this way. We use text evidence to support our thinking.

#### Focus Lessons: Memoir/Autobiography

- Readers think of the narrator in a memoir/biography/autobiography as a character in a story. We ask questions like,
  - *Why did she act that way?*
  - *Why did she think that way?*
  - *Why did she say that?*
- Readers consider a narrator's motivations in a memoir. We think about possible internal and external motivations (i.e. money, punishment, reward).
- Readers track a narrator's motivations across a text. We consider the impact of the narrator's motivations on his or her journey.
- Readers pay attention to the choices a narrator makes. We ask ourselves, *Why would the narrator have made those choices?*

- Readers know that the narrator must make a series of choices. We track the narrator's choices in our notebook, and look for patterns in them. We might ask:
  - *Is this choice typical of this narrator?*
  - *Is this choice out of the ordinary or unexpected from this narrator?*
- Readers understand that a narrator's values often guide the choices he makes. We can look closely at a narrator's choices and ask ourselves, *Do they match her values, or do they go against her values?* We chart this in our notebooks to better understand the narrator.
- Readers track a narrator's challenges or struggles across a text. We know that these can be caused by external or internal struggles, and we take note when each occurs, and ask, *What do these struggles tell me about the narrator and the world she lives in?*
- Readers consider what might influence the choices a narrator makes. We keep track of these influences in our notebook.
- Readers notice details about the narrator and other people in a memoir. We jot our reactions in our notebooks and cite evidence from the text.
- Writers understand that memoirs can be structured in different ways. We study how other authors have structured their writing and we try out several of their techniques to determine the right one for our memoir:
  - Chronological/linear
  - Bookend
  - Jumping back and forth in time
  - Parallel plotlines
  - Multiple/alternating points of view
- Readers consider who needs to read this story and why. We ask ourselves, *What would that individual learn about life from reading this text?*
- Readers begin to consider the themes in a memoir by looking closely at:
  - The narrator's interactions
  - How the narrator changes across the text
  - Symbolism
- Readers think about what life lessons the narrator's response to challenges teach us about ourselves.
- Readers consider how we might live differently after reading about a narrator's journey in a memoir.
- Readers consider themes across texts and wonder why these themes are found across multiple memoirs.
- Readers analyze story elements and devices in a memoir. We consider how each of the following help us develop ideas about a text:
  - Setting (time, place, atmosphere)
  - Narrator reliability

- Symbolism
- Conflict (Plot)
- Point of view
- Mood/ tone
- Readers develop ideas about how setting impacts a narrator’s development, growth, and choices.
- Readers track the major events in a memoir and think about their impact on the narrator’s journey.
- Readers track the minor events in a memoir and think about their impact on the narrator’s journey.
- Readers interpret figures of speech in context and analyze their roles in the text.

*Teacher Resources*

-Google Classroom, Book Creator, Flip, Kahoot, Kami, Freckle, No Red Ink, -Newsela

Optional Teacher Resources:

[\*A True Hero: Little Miss Flint\*](#) by Ashton Horne (blog)

[Everyday Leadership](#) by Drew Dudley [TED Talk]

[The Power of Introverts](#) by Susan Cain [TED Talk]

[How to Start a Movement](#) by Derek Sivers [TED Talk]

[My Little Hundred Million](#) by Malcolm Gladwell [podcast]

[The Danger of Silence](#) by Clint Smith (TED Talk)

*Becoming* by Michelle Obama

[Citing Gender Discrimination, U.S. Women's Soccer Team Files Lawsuit](#) by the Washington Post

**Differentiating Instruction:  
Students with Disabilities, English Language Learners,  
and Gifted & Talented Students**

Examples of Strategies and Practices that Support Students with Disabilities:

- Use of visual and multisensory formats
- Use of assisted technology
- Use of prompts
- Modification of content, student products, and assessment tools (rubrics for example)
- Testing accommodations
- Authentic assessments (ex: write an email to your state senator about a current event issue you are passionate about, design/implement a class debate, create and balance a college freshman budget, create a commercial that dispels a myth about climate change)

Examples of Strategies and Practices that Support Gifted & Talented Students:

- Adjusting the pace and content of lessons
- Curriculum compacting
- Inquiry-based instruction
- Independent study
- Higher-order thinking skills
- Interest-based content
- Student-driven instruction
- Real-world problems and scenarios

Examples of Strategies and Practices that Support English Language Learners:

- Pre-teaching of vocabulary and concepts
- Visual learning, including graphic organizers
- Use of cognates to increase comprehension
- Teacher modeling
- Pairing students with beginning English language skills with students who have more advanced English language skills
- Scaffolding
- Word walls
- Sentence frames
- Think-pair-share
- Cooperative learning groups



## Unit 4: An Exploration of Theme (Author Study & Book Clubs)

**Unit Summary:** In this unit, students deepen their understanding of characters and themes in order to write and discuss bigger truths about life. This means readers learn how to think right now and over time about characters, as well as refine their thinking to form bigger ideas. Reading notebooks serve as a daily tool that students use to record their thinking and collect examples from the text as support for their ideas. It's suggested that students work in either a partnership or a book club during this unit so they can regularly talk to others about their thinking. Student partners/clubs can read the same books or may simply read books by the same author or from the same series. This unit is meant to encourage students to think in many ways, talk in many ways, and write in many ways about the characters and themes they encounter in stories. As readers and writers, students track, explore, hypothesize about, challenge and refine ideas as a way to deepen their understanding of characters in literature.

### Learning Targets

NJSLS Standards:

RL.7.1. Cite several pieces of textual evidence and make relevant connections to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

RL.7.2. Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.

RL.7.3. Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (e.g., how setting shapes the characters or plot).

RL.7.6. Analyze how an author develops and contrasts the points of view of different characters or narrators in a text.

RL.7.10. By the end of the year read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems at grade level text-complexity or above, scaffolding as needed.

W.7.4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, voice and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)

W.7.9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. A. Apply grade 7 Reading standards to literature (e.g., “Compare and contrast a fictional portrayal of a time, place, or character and a historical account of the same period as a means of understanding how authors of fiction use or alter history”).

W.7.10. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, metacognition/self correction, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

SL.7.1. Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly. A. Come to discussions prepared, having read or researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion. B. Follow rules for collegial discussions, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed. C. Pose questions that elicit elaboration and respond to others’ questions and comments with relevant observations and ideas that bring the discussion back on topic as needed. D. Acknowledge new information expressed by others and, when warranted, modify their own views.

L.7.1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

L.7.2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

**Career Readiness, Life Literacies, and Key Skills (CLKS):**

- 9.4.8.GCA.2: Demonstrate openness to diverse ideas and perspectives through active discussions to achieve a group goal.
- 9.4.5.GCA.1: Analyze how culture shapes individual and community perspectives and points of view (e.g., 1.1.5.C2a, RL.5.9, 6.1.5.HistoryCC.8).

**Primary Interdisciplinary Connections:**

Civics:

- 6.3.8.CivicsPR.3: Take a position on an issue in which fundamental ideals and principles are in conflict (e.g., liberty, equality).

**Computer Science and Design Thinking Standards:**

- 8.2.8.ITH.2: Compare how technologies have influenced society over time.

**Climate Change Standards:**

- 9.4.8.IML.7: Use information from a variety of sources, contexts, disciplines, and cultures for a specific purpose (e.g., 1.2.8.C2a, 1.4.8.CR2a, W.5.8, 6.1.8.GeoSV.3.a, 6.1.8.CivicsDP.4.b, 7.1.NH. IPRET.8).

**Big Idea:** Well-written literature has the power to influence the reader and shape their thinking about common themes, ideas, and human ideals present throughout history.

**Unit Essential Questions:**

- How does an author develop a theme?
- Why should we refine our thinking about characters?
- How do our life experiences shape who we are?

**Unit Enduring Understandings:**

- Close reading allows us to monitor character development and the impactful experiences that unfold into an important life lesson.
- Our evolving understanding of characters allows us to better understand difficult topics and conflicts.
- Positive and negative pivotal moments shift our lives into new directions.

**Unit Learning Targets**

*Students will...*

- Identify an accurate topic (big ideas) for the book and expand their thinking by asking themselves “What does this book say about \_\_\_\_\_?”
- Gather details in their readers notebooks about plot and character that lead them to the theme
- Explore big ideas and their development throughout the story and then compose a theme statement after examining patterns and connections.
- Explain the theme or central idea of a fictional piece using key details as evidence, including details from the beginning, middle, and end of the text

- Analyze the development of the theme or central idea over the course of the fictional text, including the relationship between characters, setting, and plot over the course of a text
- Evaluate recurring ideas and changes in the characters and plot over the course of the text (why did the author make those changes, impact on the reader, effectiveness of the author's choices)
- Identify how the theme or central idea relates to the characters, setting, and/or plot over the course of the text

## Evidence of Learning

### Summative Assessment:

Primary assessments:

- Cold Reading Passage: Students will analyze a short text to demonstrate understanding of concepts.
- Thematic analysis choice project

### Formative Assessments:

- Theme concept checks (scaffolded exercises)
- Readers notebook entries
- Book Club/Literature Circle discussions and activities

## Teaching and Learning Plan

*Possible Teaching Points*

*Timeframe*

Possible Readers Notebook Topics:

*(can be used as spark for Book Club/Lit Circle discussion)*

- Readers reread old notebook entries and push ourselves to ask, “What else am I thinking?” We refine our first ideas by adding to an entry to capture the new ideas we’re having.
- Readers come to clubs or partnerships ready to share the parts of the story we most want to talk about. We might say, “We HAVE to talk about what happened when....” “Let’s reread this part--I was laughing out loud!” “I just couldn’t believe my eyes when...”
- Readers follow our curiosities and prepare questions to share in our book clubs or partnerships. We ask questions that help push our thinking and develop new ideas: “What do you think this part was really about?” “Why did... do...instead of...?” “What would we have done if we were...?”
- Readers look at other readers’ notebook entries for inspiration and think about how we might create similar entries in our own notebooks.
- When readers notice that we are stuck in a rut of always writing in the same ways, we challenge ourselves to try a new type of entry. We can think, “Who has tried something I might like to try?” “What have we tried as a class?” “What story element or aspect of a character have I not yet explored?”
- Readers look back across our books and notebook entries to consider the larger messages that an author is revealing to us through a character. We capture these larger themes by thinking, “Knowing this character has taught me...” “Everything this character has gone through shows...” We try to make these statements timeless rather than book-specific. (Ex. Friendship makes the trials of life easier to manage. Vs. Being a good friend made Leslie’s life better).
- Readers deepen our ideas by returning to pivotal points in a text and asking, *What is this moment really about? What is the character learning or how are they growing? What am I learning?* We return to our notebooks and write new insights.
- Readers review our book club notes and consider the patterns that emerge. We see these patterns as an invitation to consider the themes of a book. We can use an “if/then” approach to push our thinking.
  - Ex. **If** Rob (book character) always keeps his feelings inside, **then** what the author is really trying to say is that *you can never be your true self when you hide from the world.*
- Readers generate ideas for readers notebook entries. We think about the lessons we’ve learned from a book and write about these in our notebook. We consider the lessons in terms of the characters’ lives and our own. If we get stuck we can push our thinking with phrases like:
  - This makes me realize...
  - I’m still wondering...
  - I used to think, but now I think...
  - On the other hand...

6-8 weeks

- Could it also be that...
- This connects with...

### Focus Lessons: Refining Thinking about Characters

- Readers form opinions about characters in books just as we do about characters in movies and TV, and about people in life. We can think about characters from shows, movies, and life, and what opinions we have of them. We can ask ourselves, “What makes us form this opinion?” or “Why do we think in this way?”
- Readers continue to recognize the methods authors use to capture and develop characters
- Readers identify and connect the critical character choices that shift the trajectory of their journey.
- Readers pay attention to what a character is doing in a given situation and use that to evaluate and reevaluate their ideas about the character.
- Readers stop as we read to think about patterns and notice what tends to keep happening to particular characters in a book. We use these patterns to think over-time and make notebook entries to explore new ideas we’re having about a character. We might focus on repeated:
  - Trouble or conflict
  - Achievement or success
  - Settings that create ease or discomfort
  - Character interactions

### Focus Lessons: Theme

- Readers first identify an accurate topic (big ideas) for the book and expand their thinking by asking themselves “What does this book say about \_\_\_\_\_?”
- Readers can gather details throughout the text that lead them to the theme and reflect on “What is going on in this scene? and “How is this connected to the big idea?”
- Readers explore big ideas and their development throughout the story. Readers will then compose a theme statement after examining patterns and connections.
- Readers ask themselves “What are my hopes for the character?” and revisit this response as they read.
- Readers explore how their understanding of themselves, others, or the world around them has changed after reading this story  
“I used to think \_\_\_\_\_-” “Now I think \_\_\_\_\_ because”
- Readers look back across our notebook entries to consider larger messages that a character is revealing to us. We capture these larger messages or themes by thinking, “Knowing this character has taught me...” “Everything this character has gone through shows...” We write these statements as possible claims, for example: *Throughout the novel Educated, the main character, who is the narrator, teaches that poverty does not define us or our potential.*

- Readers know that themes are not singular words (such as poverty, love, friendship, etc) but rather enduring and universal messages that transcend the text we are reading. We can push ourselves to think about themes in this way by asking, “What is the author saying about *friendship* or *love* or ...?” “How is the idea of \_\_\_\_\_ used to advance, teach or enlighten this character?” We then use these reflections as the seed for our theme idea.
- Readers recognize the difference between theme statements that are book specific and ones that are timeless.

Suggested Mini-lessons/Focus Lessons:

- Notice and Note Signposts:
  - How Aha Moments and Words of the Wiser can help readers uncover theme
- Students write about/discuss some of the most important lessons that we might learn about life and why these are so important. (jot these ideas in notebooks and justify why we value these lessons the most)
- Students interact with the big ideas by using a pool of “big ideas” on index cards in the center of the table and choosing a big idea that deems most important to them/OR real life examples of how this big idea plays a role in people’s lives.

*Teacher Resources*

Professional Resources:

- *The Reading Strategies Book* (Jennifer Serravallo)
- *Notice & Note: Strategies for Close Reading* (Kylene Beers, Robert E. Probst)

Suggested Literature Circle Focus:

- Author study
- Thematic

Possible Novels to Include in Lit Circles:

- *Stuntboy in the Meantime* (Jason Reynolds)
- *Ghost* (Jason Reynolds)

- *Long Way Down* (Jason Reynolds)
- *Look Both Ways* (Jason Reynolds)
- *Patina* (Jason Reynolds)
- *Starfish* (Lisa Fipps)
- *Good Different* (Meg Eden Kuyatt)
- *Wink* (Rob Harrell)
- *Focused* (Alyson Gerber)
- *Front Desk* (Kelly Yang)

Suggested Short Stories:

- “Thank you, M’am” (Langston Hughes)
- “Amigo Brothers” (Piri Thomas)
- “Sometimes a Dream Needs a Push” (Walter Dean Myers)

Suggested Pixar Shorts:

- “Partly Cloudy”
- “Joy and Heron”
- “Game Changer”

Suggested Picture Books:

- *After the Fall* (Dan Santat)
- *The Heart and the Bottle* (Oliver Jeffers)
- *The Day the Crayons Quit* (Drew Daywalt)
- *Milo Imagines the World* (Matt De La Pena)

Additional Resources:

- Google Classroom
- Book Creator
- Flip
- Kami
- Newsela

**Differentiating Instruction:  
Students with Disabilities, English Language Learners,  
and Gifted & Talented Students**

Examples of Strategies and Practices that Support Students with Disabilities:

- Use of visual and multisensory formats
- Use of assisted technology
- Use of prompts
- Modification of content, student products, and assessment tools (rubrics for example)
- Testing accommodations
- Authentic assessments (ex: write an email to your state senator about a current event issue you are passionate about, design/implement a class debate, create and balance a college freshman budget, create a commercial that dispels a myth about climate change)

Examples of Strategies and Practices that Support Gifted & Talented Students:

- Adjusting the pace and content of lessons
- Curriculum compacting
- Inquiry-based instruction
- Independent study
- Higher-order thinking skills
- Interest-based content
- Student-driven instruction
- Real-world problems and scenarios

Examples of Strategies and Practices that Support English Language Learners:

- Pre-teaching of vocabulary and concepts
- Visual learning, including graphic organizers
- Use of cognates to increase comprehension
- Teacher modeling
- Pairing students with beginning English language skills with students who have more advanced English language skills
- Scaffolding
- Word walls
- Sentence frames
- Think-pair-share
- Cooperative learning groups